

In the Claims

Claims are amended as follows:

1. (currently amended) A network comprising a plurality of contact centers each contact center comprising:

- (i) a contact object memory storing a plurality of contact objects each representing a different contact in the network of contact centers; and
- (ii) an agent object memory storing a plurality of agent objects each representing a different agent in the network of contact centers, each of said plurality of agent objects comprising information representing a respective agent and its availability status;

said plurality of contact centers being arranged to replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects being replicated and synchronized at each of the plurality of contact centers whereby the network comprising said plurality of contact centers does not require a central network-queue manager controller and said plurality of contact centers is further arranged such that, if there a fault or a change of mode of operation at one of said plurality of contact centers, remaining ones of said plurality of contact centers continue to replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects at each of said remaining ones of the plurality of contact centers.

2. (original) A network as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of said contact centers is arranged to receive incoming contacts directly at that contact center.

3. (original) A network as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least one of said contact centers is arranged to operate in a first mode and a second mode; whereby in said first mode at least some incoming contacts received directly at that contact center are serviced only by said contact center; and whereby in said second mode at least some incoming contacts received directly at that contact center are serviced at any suitable contact center in the network.

4. (original) A network as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of the contact centers further comprises a processor arranged to access the contact objects and the agent

objects stored at that contact center in order to allocate a contact to the most suitable agent network-wide.

5. (original) A network as claimed in claim 1 wherein said most suitable agent network-wide is a network longest-idle agent.

6. (original) A network as claimed in claim 1 wherein each of the contact centers further comprises a processor arranged to access the contact objects and the agent objects stored at that contact center such that when an agent becomes available at that contact center a contact is selected for that agent network-wide.

7. (currently amended) A contact center for use in a network of contact centers, said contact center comprising:

- a) a contact object memory storing a plurality of contact objects each representing a different contact in the network of contact centers; and
- b) an agent object memory storing a plurality of agent objects each representing a different agent in the network of contact centers, each of said plurality of agent objects comprising information representing a respective agent and its availability status;
- c) means for notifying changes in any of said contact objects and agent objects to other contact centers in the network of contact centers to thereby replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects with those at each of the other contact centers; and
- d) means arranged such that, if there a fault or a change of mode of operation at another contact center of said network of contact centers, the contact center is arranged to continue to replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects with those at each of the other contact centers save for the another contact center.

8. (currently amended) A method of managing a contact in a network of contact centers said method comprising:

- (i) at each contact center in the network storing a plurality of contact objects each representing a different contact in the network of contact centers; and
- (ii) at said each contact center storing a plurality of agent objects each representing a different agent in the network of contact centers, each of said plurality of agent objects comprising information representing a respective agent and its availability status; and
- (iii) at said each contact center, notifying all other contact centers of any changes in contact objects and agent objects stored at said contact center to thereby replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects at each of the contact centers in the network; and,
- (iv) if there a fault or a change of mode of operation at one of said contact centers, continuing to replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects at each of remaining ones of said contact centers.

9. (original) A method as claimed in claim 8 which further comprises receiving an incoming contact directly at any of said contact centers in the network.

10. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 8 which comprises operating each contact center in a first mode and a second mode; whereby in said first mode at least some incoming contacts received directly at that contact center are serviced only by said contact center; and whereby in said second mode at least some incoming contacts received directly at that contact center are serviced at any suitable contact center in the network.

11. (original) A method as claimed in claim 8 which further comprises using a processor at any of the contact centers to access the contact objects and the agent objects stored at that contact center in order to allocate a contact to the most suitable agent network-wide

12. (original) A method as claimed in claim 8 which further comprises using a processor at any of the contact centers to access the contact objects and the agent

objects stored at that contact center such that when an agent becomes available at that contact center a contact is selected for that agent network-wide.

13. (currently amended) A method of operating a contact center in a network of contact centers, said method comprising the steps of:

- (i) at said contact center storing a plurality of contact objects each representing a different contact in the network of contact centers;
- (ii) at said contact center storing a plurality of agent objects each representing a different agent in the network of contact centers, each of said plurality of agent objects comprising information representing a respective agent and its availability status;
- (iii) notifying all other contact centers in said network of contact centers of any changes in said contact objects and agent objects to thereby replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects with those at each of the other contact centers; and,
- (iv) if there a fault or a change of mode of operation at another contact center of said network of contact centers, continuing to replicate and synchronize said contact objects and agent objects with those at the contact center and each of the other contact centers save for the another contact center.

14-15. (cancelled).